

Remarks

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested.

Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, claims 12-21 are pending in the application, with 12 being the only independent claim. Claims 1-11 have been cancelled. These changes are believed to introduce no new matter, and their entry is respectfully requested.

Based on the above amendment and the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 12-21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,947,956 to Henline ("Henline") in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,042,053 to Sieren *et al.* ("Sieren"). During an Examiner interview held on November 23, 2004, the Examiner indicated that if claim 12 were re-written to more clearly recite that "which performs the function recited in the last 4 lines of claim 12, [] it would overcome the 103 rejection."

Further to the Examiner interview, claim 12 has been amended. Claim 12, as amended, makes more clear that there is a structure transmitting power to first and second axles, whereby a relative velocity between the first and second axle steplessly varies corresponding to variation of a distance ratio between the first and second axles from a turning circle center of the vehicle. Neither Henline nor Sieren disclose such a means for transmitting power to the first and second axles. This amendment is not intended to narrow the scope of claim 12.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants' independent claim 12 is patentable over the combination of the Henline and Sieren references. As a result, claim 12 is in condition for allowance. Claims 13-21 depend from independent claim 12 and therefore are also in condition for allowance.

Amendments to the Specification

Paragraph [0049] has been amended to correct a typographical error. No new matter has been added by the amendment.

Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicants believe that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment and Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

STERNE, KESSLER, GOLDSTEIN & FOX P.L.L.C.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tracy Durkin", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Tracy-Gene G. Durkin
Attorney for Applicants
Registration No. 32,831

Date: November 23, 2004

1100 New York Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005-3934
(202) 371-2600